

SOMERSWORTH SCHOOL BOARD

September 11, 2018

Mulligans Grill-CTC

7:00pm

1. **CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Austin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Upon call of the roll the following members were present: Austin, Hanlon, Hiller, Yoder, Larson, McCallion, Brennan, and Richardson. Excused: Cannon Austin thanked everyone for their flexibility in attending the meeting at Mulligans Grill due to the fact that it was Primary Election Day and City Hall was otherwise occupied.
2. **COMMENTS BY VISITORS:** Drew Allard stated that he is a Dover resident and goes to Somersworth High School. He stated that he takes a CTC class with Bill Rogers, an amazing teacher. He stated that he has learned so many amazing things from him. He stated that Bill Rogers allows them to do things outside of the classroom like being here tonight. He stated that they get to learn the newest things possible, doing it in the classroom and outside the classroom. He stated that he just wanted to thank Bill Rogers for being his teacher for the past two years.
Barbara Wentworth stated that she noticed that a discussion of outsourcing the custodians was on the agenda for the evening and she wanted to know if members of the Board could tell her why this would be beneficial. She stated that these custodians are people who helped raise our children. She stated that at Idlehurst and Maple Wood she does not believe they could do half of the things they do without the help from them. She stated they go above and beyond for us. She stated that since the reorganization of the two schools, she has looked on the website and there does seem to be an imbalance in staff at the two buildings and this was one of the reasons given as a positive for the reorganization was the shifting of staff and that it would be equal at both schools. She stated that there is an incredible discrepancy in staff and she is hoping this can be explained at some point.
3. **CONSENT CALENDAR:**
 - 3.1 **Removal of items from the consent calendar:**
 - 3.2 **Approval of Consent Calendar:** A motion made by Richardson seconded by Hanlon to approve the consent calendar as presented. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Approved were:
 - August 21, 2018- Somersworth School Board Meeting Minutes
 - August 21, 2018-Building and Grounds Meeting Summary
 - August 28, 2018-Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Summary
 - August 31, 2018-Building and Grounds Meeting Summary
 - September 5, 2018-Building and Grounds Meeting Summary
 - August 2018 Somersworth Enrollment
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Gadomski thanked all students, parents and staff for persevering through the start of school in one heat wave, followed by a second heat wave. He stated that everyone did a great job of making adjustments and staying cool as much as possible. He stated that there have been some adjustments to be worked on with our bus stops. We have had requests to review bus stops. He stated that some have been changed. He stated that there is always the balance between making a number of stops at everyone's house and still getting the kids to school on time with no more than about a 30-35 minute ride. He stated that tomorrow evening he would be presenting to the City Finance Committee the information about the Maple Wood Project for final consideration. He stated that the Finance Committee is possibly wanting to add a new roof to the project which is approximately \$430,000. He stated that next Monday would be the presentation to the City Council. He stated that he wanted to extend an invitation to everybody to the Back to School Kickoff Party at the High School from 6-7 this Friday night. He stated that each school would have a table with information and you would be able to have your fingerprints done. He stated that the football game is at 7:00 so hopefully you'll be able to stay for that. He stated that in addition to a discussion regarding the Maple Wood Project at the City Council Meeting next Monday,

we have a SACA Contract that will be brought forward to them, assuming the Board approves it tonight. He stated that Bob Couture, President of the Custodial Union has notified him that they are ready to start Custodial Negotiations so I will be getting in touch with him and the committee and we can start the formal negotiations. He stated that last Thursday night/early morning there had been a water main break on Stackpole Road and he wanted to thank Mike Bobinsky for keeping him informed as to the situation as it was touch and go for a while as to whether or not we could have school at Idlehurst due to the low water pressure. He stated that he appreciates the cooperation of the City.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

5.1 Standing Committees

- **Budget and Revenue:** Austin stated that the committee had met on August 28, 2018. He stated that they looked at what was close to the final numbers for the 17-18 fiscal year. He stated that it looks like we are ending up in better shape than we thought we would. He stated that it really is too early to get too deep into this fiscal year as it just started.
- **Building, Grounds and Transportation:** McCallion stated that they have been dealing with the HVAC which the committee is bringing forward for approval tonight.
- **Curriculum and Activities:** None
- **Policy Committee:** None
- **Joint Commission of City Council and School Board:** None

5.3 City Council Update: None

5.4 Student Representative Report: Dylan Zinkevich: Zinkevich stated that Spirit Week was coming up on October 9-12. He stated that Homecoming would be Friday, October 12th with a Homecoming Dance on Saturday, October 13th. He stated that the Senior Class would have shirts to sell in October. He stated that the Freshman Class would be having elections on September 21st to elect a president, vice president, treasurer, secretary and historian. He stated that the Music Department is doing a fundraiser selling mums, which ends tomorrow. He stated that the seniors are selling candles through October 12th. He stated that the National Honor Society is in the process of looking for new members and the induction ceremony will be sometime in October. He stated that the marching band will be at the game on Friday and are participating in a show on Saturday.

6. ACTION ITEM:

6.1 RFP Outsourcing Custodial: Gadomski stated that the RFP that was included in the packet was similar to the one that was in your last packet but you had some questions about weekend work which has been added to this RFP. He stated that the City would be piggybacking off of our RFP with their own and both would be sent out at the same time. He stated that it would be sent out for 2-3 weeks and see what we get back and this will give the Board some additional information to see if this is fiscally responsible or not. Richardson stated that we should give the City a copy of our RFP to keep them informed. Gadomski stated we could do that as it is a public document. Richardson stated that he had received a phone call from Peter Miller requesting that the Board delay the vote so the Union would have time to look at the RFP. Gadomski stated that the Union has had the RFP for a week. Austin stated he wanted everyone to understand that what is being talked about is a Request for Proposals and is not a contract or commitment of any kind. He stated that the Board feels that this is fiscally responsible to take a look at this as an option. He stated that they are always looking for ways to better make use of the money and maintain the level of services that we provide. He stated that it is an opportunity for the Board to take some fiscal management. He stated that there is no other action other than is what is on the table this evening of the Request for Proposals to move forward. Larson asked when the RFP goes out, when would we expect to get the proposals back. Gadomski stated that it would be about three weeks. Larson stated that we could then potentially discuss the proposals received at the first Board Meeting in October. She stated that at the Board Retreat one of the things discussed was the climate and culture in the schools. She stated that there is a tenseness around this and it seems unfair that the custodians are left not

knowing what will happen with this. She stated that there seems to be a potential to outsource. She stated that if we do end up outsourcing there needs to be some clarification as to what it means for the custodians. Richardson stated that when they were in negotiations it was stated that the union be involved in this every step of the way. He stated that it is their lives, it is their jobs. He stated that in the first part of the RFP it states that the current custodians have first crack at the jobs. He stated to do this they need to know what the benefits and work conditions will be, which should be what they essentially do now. He stated that they can be present at any time any bidder comes to review the building. He stated they can be there to take the bidder on a tour of the building. He stated that it is for their benefit and the benefit of the City. Larson asked how it would impact the custodian's retirement. Austin stated that this would be part of the detail when we get the RFPs back. He stated that they would no longer be employees of Somersworth so they would be a part of the retirement plan that the new entity provides. Larson stated that they would lose everything that they have invested in retirement with the district. Gadomski stated that their current retirement would cease accruing. Yoder stated that she had a constituent that sent an email to her as she could not make the meeting and wanted to know if she could read it. Austin asked if this was from somebody who signed it. Yoder stated it was. She read as follows:

Hi. I am writing as a parent, concerned citizen and taxpayer of the Somersworth Community. It has come to my attention that the School Board will be taking a vote to explore the possibility of outsourcing our school custodial staff. These men and women go above and beyond for our students every day. They help keep our schools running and looking amazing. The students know the custodians by name and the custodians are some of the only staff that have a connection with all of the students. My son, Calvin, comes home talking about Mr. Doug, Mr. Smith, Mr. Viola and Miss Gloria all the time. He has formed a connection with them. He enjoys chatting with them and helping them clean. They are also patient with him as well as the other students. The custodians know and love our children. They do anything to assist with the running of our school. The need to be appreciated and valued. The custodial staff at Maple Wood and Idlehurst worked tirelessly this summer to get both schools ready for the reorganization. I am urging you to vote no on this. Thank you, Beth Day

Hiller stated that she wanted to reiterate that just because an RFP is going out it is only a Request for Proposals. She stated that the Board does not have to choose one of the proposals. She stated that the Board is just trying to see what the alternatives are. She stated that we are trying to be fiscally responsible so your taxes don't rise. She stated that this is not to show any disrespect for the custodians. She stated that when she was in Junior High she does not think she would have made it through without the custodian. She stated that he listened to her and he was somebody to talk to. She stated that custodians go far beyond cleaning the schools. Austin stated that he was looking for action on the Request for Proposals. Richardson made a motion seconded by Hanlon to proceed with the Request for Proposals to outsource custodial services. Hiller made a motion seconded by McCallion to have a roll call vote. Austin-yes, Richardson-yes, Brennan-no, Larson-no, Hanlon-yes, Hiller-yes, Yoder-no, McCallion-yes. Motion passed, 5-3.

6.2 HVAC Bid Approval: McCallion stated that two bids were received and they were pretty much the same except for the cost. He stated that they approved the lower cost one and this is what is being brought forward for approval tonight. Larson made a motion seconded by Hiller to accept the bid from Ideal Temp HVAC in accordance with their proposal, not to exceed \$28,500. Austin stated that they had sent out an RFP for an HVAC replacement and they received two bids and the Building, Grounds and Transportation Committee reviewed the bids and awarded the bid to Ideal Temp HVAC. He stated that funding for this is coming out of the remaining funds from the Eversource rebate that was received from 2011. He stated the amount of the bid is \$28,500.00. Motion passed, unanimously.

6.3 SACA Contract Approval: Austin stated that this would be delayed until the Board had time to discuss it in non-public.

7. NEW BUSINESS: None

8. OLD BUSINESS:

8.1 2017-2018 Budget Review: Krauss stated that in packets is the unaudited year end 2017-2018 Financial Status. She stated that at the end of the year the Board had requested a supplemental appropriation of \$412,000. She stated that the District was able to return \$225,979.88 of that to the City. She stated that this was due to savings in Special Education as we were not sure of what expenses we would have at the end of the year and the estimated amounts came in lower than expected. She stated that moving forward they are looking at putting a different process in place with the Special Education Purchase Orders and transportation expenses to have a better handle on what can be unencumbered during the year. She stated that on the revenue side, in addition to the \$183,284 we received at the beginning of the year, we also received \$62,177.16 in anticipated revenue primarily due to Medicaid reimbursement.

8.2 2018-2019 Budget Update: Krauss stated that all salaries and benefits for new staff had been updated as well as moving staff to the proper buildings due to the reorganization. She stated that we are in the early stages of this budget. She stated that they had received the first payment for Kindergarten Aid which is new this year. She stated that final figures from the State have not been issued but she will keep the Board posted as we receive figures and the final allocation for State Adequacy.

9. Mayor Forum Dates:

- **October 13, 2018-At Large School Board Members (Don Austin, Kelly Brennan):** Brennan stated that they had attended the Mayor's Forum in September and this was an error. Austin stated that someone would be there from the Board. He stated that these meetings are open to the public with the chance to have coffee and donuts with the Mayor and members of the City Council and School Board. He stated that there can be some lively conversations.

10. Future Meeting Dates/Suggested Agenda Items:

- **September 18, 2018-SAU 56 Board Meeting-6:30 PM-CTC 1st floor Mulligans Grill**
- **September 25, 2018- Budget and Revenue Committee Meeting-5:30 PM-SAU Conference Room**
- **September 25, 2018-Somersworth School Board Meeting-7:00 PM- City Hall Chambers**

Hiller stated that she would like to explore the option of changing the meetings on election days and what people think about this. Larson stated that she does not understand the ad hoc committees but she would like to have a discussion about the SYC Program for which she is on the ad hoc committee. Austin asked if she was looking for something in particular. Larson stated that she just wanted to give an update. She stated that it is not listed with the Standing Committees. Austin stated that they invite the SYC in once a year to do a presentation. Larson stated that she would like to give an update as of October which would include the summer.

11. CLOSING COMMENTS

11.1 Visitors: Mark Ferris stated that now that the school year has started he would like to know what expenses have been incurred for relocating materials and personnel from one school to another. He stated he would like to know where the funds were allocated from because that was not a budget item. He stated that he wondered when this information would be made available to the public. Ken Bolduc stated that when meetings are held at Mulligan's Grill people cannot hear. He stated that he wonders how many people in the back could not hear the Board talking because the microphones were not hooked up to any system in the location. He stated that the proper place to be holding a meeting was City Hall, even if you had to move the date. He stated that even though he had been sitting in the front he heard very little of the conversation this evening. Michelle Nash stated that ten years ago when she became a paraprofessional, her mother-in-law told her that the best friends you need to make are your custodians because they will have your back. She stated that the custodians at Idlehurst have her back, her front, her sides, they walk me out to the car to make sure it starts. She stated that every request that she takes to them they take it with both hands and spirit. She stated that they cannot have a better custodial staff. Martin Landry stated that he is a custodian, once at Hilltop School and now at Idlehurst. He stated that he feels that the custodians are part of the whole

school system. He stated that they interact with the staff and children. He stated that their job is not only to keep the school clean but to keep it a safe environment for everyone. He stated that he takes pride in his work and ethic and tries to be a role model for the children. He stated that he hopes the School Board takes into consideration that they bring more to the school community than any outsourcing company would be able to do. Donna Hebert stated that she has been with SAU 56 for over 30 years. She stated that it is an honor to speak after Marty Landry who is a janitor at Idlehurst. She stated that she hopes that before any final decision is made that School Board members come into the school and witnesses how the students interact with the person who just spoke. She stated that they have a program called Check In Check Out and all staff help students who have difficulties, at home or at school, connect with staff members and I cannot tell you how many students wanted to be with Marty. She stated that when he was in our skit show and put on a wig the kids applauded. She stated that a new company may save money but not be as involved in our schools. She stated that she just wants School Board Members to come visit the schools so that you can see firsthand what the staff sees every day. Robyn Austin stated that she wanted to piggyback on what Nash and Hebert had stated. She stated that the custodians are the most wonderful people that she has ever met. They take care of the adults and the students. She stated that our schools would not look like they do today if it was not for these people. She stated that they worked diligently over the summer. She stated that she wanted to ask the Board to reconsider the outsourcing. She stated that it would be detrimental to the kids to take the custodians away. Jodie Lynn Corbeil stated that this is her 14th year teaching in Somersworth. She stated that Marty Landry is too humble. She stated that he neglected to tell you that he is an integral part of their Check In, Check Out Program. She stated that he connects with so many kids who value that minute with him in the morning and the afternoon. She stated that one of her students from last year fell in the hallway today and custodian Brad Dumont was the one who picked him up. She stated that the student was all disheveled and he needed to get to his bus, but Brad Dumont stopped and tied his shoe and got him out to the bus where he needed to be. She stated that Marty Landry is literally the rock star at Idlehurst. She stated that he is an active part of our community days. She stated that the custodians are part of our family. She stated that she wants the Board to think about the retirement benefits that the custodians have paid into the system. She stated that it is not fair that some of these guys have been in the district for 8-9 years and what is going to happen to all that cash that they have paid into the retirement system. Barbara Wentworth stated that she now understands more about the custodial outsourcing. She stated that she understands that it is a Request for Proposals but she also understands that we just went through an intense summer and the custodial staff worked tirelessly to make this happen. She stated that now we are saying thank you but we are going to look at outsourcing. She stated that maybe the district will save a dollar or maybe they will save a lot of money. She stated that you can raise her taxes. She stated that this hurts her heart. She stated that with everything the community has gone through with their high emotions and we got to this point and are looking to the future and now the custodial staff is under review. She stated that she questions why any time is spent on this makes her feel dumbfounded and makes her want to review what the Board's purpose is.

11.2 Board Members: McCallion stated that he wanted to thank all the custodians who are present tonight. He stated thank you for all the support from parents and staff. He stated that as we move forward, as a Board and look at this, I am sure that we are going to make an intelligent decision. He stated that Somersworth is a family. He stated that the custodians do a lot. He stated that he needs to look at all situations. He stated that the Board would not be doing their job if they were not looking at all situations. Hiller stated that we hear you and we agree whole heartedly and this is not anything against the custodians that we have now. She stated that it is an exercise to find out if they can do better. She stated that the Board does not have to act on any proposals received. Hanlon stated that this has come up in the past and he fought it tooth and nail for a lot of the same reasons that were

expressed tonight. He stated that there are a lot of things that have changed and a lot of things this past year with budget situations that make us responsible to look at this. He stated that it is his responsibility to look at the options as an elected official. Larson stated that she holds the wellbeing of the community close to her heart. She stated that she, her husband and children live here. She stated that she sits in this seat because she cares about the health of the community. She stated that with the outsourcing it just does not feel good at this time after a whole change to our elementary schools and settling into that change. She stated that if negotiations could move in a positive direction she hopes it can happen. She stated that the climate and culture of Somersworth needs to be one where we do not live in a vacuum. Richardson stated that everyone should keep in mind that we presently have a 1 year contract with the custodians and we will be entering into negotiations very shortly. He stated that the negotiations could make all the difference in the world. He stated that at that point we will have something to compare the RFPs with. He stated we need to look at this on a financial basis. He stated that perhaps they can negotiate a long term contract with the custodians that will be well and good. He stated we need to see what the numbers come in from the RFP's and we'll have that information. He stated that everyone needed to keep in mind that it is right at the top of the RFP that first dibs for the jobs go to the current custodial staff. He stated that the staffing probably would not be changing at all at the schools. He stated that as a Board they had to look at this from all angles. He stated that he appreciates all that came out tonight. Brennan stated that she wanted to thank Dana Hilliard for having the Mayor Forums on Saturdays. She stated that it is cool that they live in a City that allows this get together on a Saturday morning to have coffee and donuts and talk about things that happen in the community. She stated that this is a great place to live in whether or not you agree or disagree on something. Austin stated that he appreciates all the comments tonight and everyone being present. He stated that it is important to hear where the public's priorities are. He stated that the Board is making decisions all the time and we have to understand where the priorities of the community are. He stated that the custodial staff has been second to none for quite some time. He stated that it is a time when we need to penny pinch and examine all the programs and services and we need to look at all the areas where we can provide the same level of services and save some money. He stated that if we cannot provide the same level of services then no amount of savings is worth it. He stated if they come to a successful conclusion to the negotiations with the custodial staff that will be wonderful. He stated that information is just information.

12. NON-PUBLIC: A motion made by Hanlon seconded by Hiller to exit into non-public session in accordance with Chapter 91-A:3 II (c) matter if which discussed in public would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person and (e) negotiations. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Entered non-public at 8:00 PM. A motion made by Hanlon seconded by Richardson to exit out of non-public session. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Exited out of non-public at 9:12 PM.

A motion made by Richardson seconded by Hiller to approve the SACA Contract. VOTE: motion passed, 7-0 with 1 member abstaining.

13. ADJOURNMENT: A motion made by Brennan seconded by Hiller to adjourn. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:14 PM.

Melinda Sullivan
Board Secretary

Pending Board Approval